



American Center Newsletter



February 2009

American Center In Action

American Center hosts workshop for Journalists to strengthen their ability to report accurately and effectively on HIV/AIDS



James Kelly and Jyotika Ramprasad from Pakistan with other journalists

January 12-13, 2009 – The American Center and journalism academics from the Universities of Indiana and Miami hosted a State Department funded workshop for local journalists from print and electronic media.

Fourteen journalists from Sri Lanka and two journalists from Pakistan participated in the two-day workshop which was held in the American Center auditorium. The program was further enriched by the

participation of a Consultant Venereologist of the National STD/ AIDS Control Program under Sri Lanka's Ministry of Health, representatives from NGOs working actively in the areas of HIV/AIDS, and a journalism educator from the College of Journalism in Colombo.

"Education Finances: Investments vs Returns", second lecture of series on "Education - Investing in Future Generations"



Dr Harsha Aturupane, Senior Economist World Bank, Sri Lanka spoke on education

January 22, 2009 - Dr Aturupane Senior Economist, World Bank Sri Lanka and Dr Nancy Carriuolo, President of the Rhode Island College, United States gave presentations linked via DVC at the American Center on bridging gaps in the education system.

The lecture focused on investments in Education, investment returns on educating women and children, economic policy options to maximize the benefits of investments in education, best practices and

trends.

The lecture series, organized by the American Center in collaboration with Room to Read focuses on education policy and aims to build connections between U.S. and Sri Lankan educators, educational institutions, and policy makers through digital video conferences.

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Colombo 3
Sri Lanka

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Upcoming Events . . .

Artist of the Month Exhibition



Lalith Senanayake will display his paintings at the American Center in February 2009.



Theme of the
Month

**AMERICAN
MUSIC**

See page 9

Rohan De Silva – Music takes him around the world, but his heart remains in Sri Lanka



Rohan
Pic. by John Beebe

Music has taken world renowned pianist Rohan De Silva all over the world but he always has time to come back home to Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan born De Silva has performed to critical acclaim at venues across the globe, including Carnegie Hall in New York, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, Wigmore Hall in

London and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. De Silva, along with violin virtuoso Itzhak Perlman recently performed at a State Dinner for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II that former-President and Mrs. Bush hosted at the White House.

De Silva, who became an American citizen in 2000, makes his home in New York but manages to return to Sri Lanka at least twice a year. On a recent visit to Colombo he reminisced about his early piano education under his late mother Primrose De Silva and Mary Billimoria. It was his early passion for music and these childhood teachers that enabled him to win a prestigious scholarship at just 14 years of age to study at the Royal Academy of Music. At 16, De Silva left Colombo and Issipathana College, where he had studied, for London. In London, his talent was quickly recognized. He won numerous

scholarships and awards and after six years of study, he was selected as the recipient for the Chappell Gold Medal for best overall performance at the Royal Academy. At this time he also received the first ever special scholarship in the arts from the President's Fund in Sri Lanka. This enabled him to enter the Julliard School where he received both his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees. De Silva was the first Sri Lankan ever to attend the prestigious New York institution. Two Sri Lankans, Tharanga Goonetilleke and Dinuk Wijeyratne have subsequently attended Julliard as well.

De Silva sees music, including classical music as a "universal language" that can have a wide appeal, not just for the elite. Some of De Silva's friends were members of the New York Philharmonic that recently travelled to North Korea for a concert and he was enthusiastic to see music opening doors between the peoples of the two countries. In Sri Lanka during the Presidency of Chandrika Kumaratunga, De Silva travelled to schools with the Ministry of Education to share ideas for music education and performed with Ashan Pillai, a Sri Lankan-born Tamil who is now the principle violinist in the Barcelona Symphony.

While his work takes him all over the world De Silva still remains proud of his Sri Lankan heritage. He speaks of his fervent wish for peace on the island and his hope that in the future many of those who attend his performances will one day come visit the island of his birth to see the natural beauty and hospitality of the people of Sri Lanka.

Our news, your views , visit:

<http://usembassycolombo.blogspot.com>



U.S. Government provides scholarships to 18 journalism students from the East



Ambassador Blake presents a USAID Scholarship certificate to R. Jegatheswary of Batticaloa.

January 7, 2009 : In a ceremony at the Sri Lanka Press Institute U.S. Ambassador Robert Blake presented scholarships to 18 students from the Eastern Province and Monaragala District to attend the Sri Lanka College of Journalism.

The scholarships, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), will allow the students to attend the one-year Journalism Diploma Programme, focusing on radio, television, or print media. Courses are conducted in Sinhala, Tamil, and English, and all students receive English language instruction. The USAID scholarship program supports almost equal numbers of Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim students, representing Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Monaragala districts.

Each of the USAID scholarship recipients will return to their home districts or provinces to work as journalists after receiving their diplomas. This will strengthen regional reporting and ensure journalists are well-trained and prepared to cover stories that matter to area residents and Colombo decision-makers.

U.S. Government renovates seven schools and one hospital in former LTTE-controlled areas of Eastern Province

January 15, 2009 : To improve the lives of Sri Lankans affected by the conflict, the U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Pacific Command, is rehabilitating five schools in

Trincomalee District and one hospital and two schools in Batticaloa District.

U.S. Government officials joined national, provincial and local education and health officials, community leaders, school and hospital staff, students and their families, and local residents for the official groundbreaking ceremonies to mark the beginning of the renovation and expansion projects in eight communities in Trincomalee and Batticaloa. All projects are scheduled to be completed by July 2009.



Ambassador Blake prepares to lay the first stone at the groundbreaking at Navatkadu Hospital in Batticaloa District.

The buildings chosen for renovation provide essential social services to civilians whose

lives have been repeatedly disrupted by armed hostilities for as long as two decades. In several of the communities, residents were displaced and not all have returned to the area.

USAID funded Career Days in Ampara and Batticaloa help youth find training and jobs

The Accelerated Skills Acquisition Program (ASAP) conducted two Career Days for youth in Eastern Sri Lanka to strengthen links between local companies and training providers, as well as to help youth find jobs and training opportunities.

The Ampara event was held on Tuesday, January 27 at the Daya Apparel Conference Hall in the Ampara town from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. The Batticaloa event held on Thursday, January 29 at the Selvanayagam Memorial Hall at the Methodist Church premises in Koddamunnai, Batticaloa from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm.

Free Group Advising for the Month of February

At US-SL Fulbright Commission Colombo :

Tuesday 17th, 2.45 pm

Orientation for undergraduate studies.

For Prospective students for Bachelor's Degrees

(Covers background information, entrance requirements, how to select universities and application process)

Monday 23rd, 3 pm

Orientations for graduate studies

For Prospective students for Post-graduate Degrees

(Covers background information, entrance requirements, how to select universities opportunities for financial aid, and application process)

At Galle Mahinda College Old Boys' Union Auditorium :

Thursday 26th – 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Friday 27th - 8:30 – 3:00 pm

Admission: Free. Please note that prior registration is necessary to attend the above programs.

Please contact by visit, phone, fax or e-mail:

United States - Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission
22, Flower Terrace, Colombo 7
Phone: 094-112-564176
Fax: 094-112-564153
E-mail: advising@isplanka.lk
Web: www.fulbrightsrilanka.com

At Kandy American Corner :

Thursday 12th 11:00 am - 1:30 pm

Individual Appointments.

2:30 pm onwards

Orientation Program as needed or Individual Appointments.

Friday 13th 8:30 am - 10:30 am

Individual Appointments.

10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Orientation Program as needed or Individual Appointments.

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Special session / Writing a winning application essay / Financial aid awareness program as needed or Individual Appointments.

American Corner,
1st Floor,
D.S. Senanayake Memorial Public Library
Kandy

Phone: 081 222 3716

Did you go to University in America?



Then join the American Alumni Association of Sri Lanka.

AAA is an active group of US University Grads and we're looking for new members!

For information about membership please contact Mukesh Shanker at mukesh@sltnet.lk

Fulbright Science and Technology Award for Outstanding Foreign Students -2010

Applications are called from eligible candidates for nomination from Sri Lanka for the above award for PhD study at top US institutions in science, technology or engineering. Subjects may include bioinformatics, computer science, mathematics, mechanical engineering, neuroscience and physics. For more details about the award and eligible fields please visit: <http://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/scienceandtech>

Eligibility: Candidates must be citizens of Sri Lanka

Candidates should possess a 1st class or upper second class undergraduate degree in the proposed field of study

Candidates selected for nomination from Sri Lanka will be expected to show proficiency in English with a TOEFL score of 580 or higher, and a GRE General Exam quantitative score of at least 700.

Application procedure: Please post (under registered cover) your PhD research proposal and a copy of your CV to the US-SLFC address below.

Deadline: 1st of May 2009

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. The decision of the selection committee will be final.

United States-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission
22 Flower Terrace
Colombo 7
Tel: 471-8744
Email: fulbright@isplanka.lk
Website: www.fulbrightsrilanka.com

American Center Presents a lecture on Small & Medium Enterprise : Development Strategy for Sri Lanka

Speakers: **Mr Shalitha Wijesundera**,
Director of Sri Lanka's National
Enterprise Development
Authority, Sri Lanka

Mr Mark Troppe,
Manager of Strategic Partnerships
at the US Department of
Commerce's NIST
(National Institute of Standards
and Technology) Manufacturing
Extension Partnership Program,
USA (linked via Digital Video
Conferencing)

Date:
11th February 2009

Time:
6.30 pm to 8.00pm

Venue:
American Center
No. 44, Galle Road
Colombo 03

RSVP 011-2498106 and 011-2498163



American Center and the Fulbright Commission at the EDEX 2009

The American Center and the United States - Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission hosted a booth at the Colombo EDEX 2009: National Higher Education and Careers Expo held at the BMICH, January 23 to 25. Visitors to the stall received handouts and professional advice on attending U.S. universities, applying for scholarship funding and for U.S. student visas.

Hundreds of students participated in raffle draw organized by the American Center library for free library membership. The exhibition was a good opportunity to introduce new library programs to the public such as Monthly Essay Competition, After School Movies, as well as the benefits of American Higher Education.

Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)

Washington's Birthday Holiday Honors First President

Americans long have honored George Washington, commander of the United States armies in the War of Independence, first president of the United States, and "first in the hearts of his countrymen."



George Washington was commander in chief of the Continental army during the American Revolution and first president of the United States (1789-97).

During the Revolutionary War, Washington's small band of soldiers faced a well-equipped professional army, but he led his often ragged forces to victory in the face of incredible hardships.

Washington enjoyed nearly universal respect, not least for spurning all offers of political power at the moment of his military triumph (1781), choosing instead to return to his Mount Vernon, Virginia, farm. The drafters of the new Constitution in 1787 were willing to afford the executive branch greater powers because they anticipated that Washington, who could be counted on not to abuse his office, would serve as the chief executive, and would establish important precedents for his successors.

The most popular figure in America at the end of his second four-year term, Washington again decided to relinquish power, establishing an informal eight-year limit later formalized by the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution (1951).

It has been said that the American people themselves forced Congress to establish the Washington's Birthday holiday, which today is fixed by law on the third Monday of February. Nineteenth-century Americans commonly celebrated a holiday on February 22, the day of Washington's birth. Apparently motivated by chronic employee absenteeism on that date, Congress in 1879 declared Washington's Birthday a legal public holiday.

In 1971, Congress fixed Washington's Birthday and a number of other holidays on Mondays, to create long holiday weekends. Because a number



Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site, Kentucky

of states (but not the federal government) also officially celebrate the February 12 birthday of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president, many

Americans have come to believe -- incorrectly -- that the third Monday of February is a consolidated "Presidents' Day" honoring both Washington and Lincoln, and indeed all U.S. presidents. Many states designate the holiday as Presidents' Day, and merchants offer Presidents' Day sales.

The federal holiday, however, remains Washington's Birthday. It is but one way in which Americans celebrate the life of the man often called the "father of his country." The 555-foot-high (169-meter) Washington Monument, dedicated in 1885, dominates the skyline of the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. A 60-foot-high (18-meter) likeness of Washington was carved in stone (completed in 1941) on South Dakota's Mount Rushmore, along with those of Presidents Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1976, Congress posthumously promoted Washington to the rank of six-star general of the armies, assuring that he would continue to outrank all other members of the military, now and in the future.

Source www.america.gov

Monthly Essay Competition



Learn about America

ESSAY COMPETITION



Essay Competition for School Children on the theme of Learn About America

The American Center has organized an essay competition for school children which will be published in Junior Observer of the Sunday Observer from Sunday 11th January 2009.

The monthly essay topic is given under three age categories 12-14 years, 15-16 years and 17-18 years.

Each age group is given a monthly topic related to the United States of America and are asked to write an essay with minimum word count. The students can conduct research for their essay at the American Center Library in Colombo, at American Corners in Kandy and Oluvil, or from other sources like the Internet. America.gov is a very good internet resource with lots of information on the United States, its culture, history, literature, politics, tourist attractions and much more.

The first three winners in each age group will be given a selection of American books, as well as lifetime membership to the American Center Library as well as a certificate signed by the U.S. Ambassador. A prize giving ceremony will be held at the American Center Colombo every two months.

Essay topics for February are as follows :

12-14 years

The White House (500 words)

15-16 years

Newly elected U.S. President Barack Obama (750 words)

17-18 years

Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War (1000 words)

Please see the Junior Observer of the Sunday Observer for more details.

eJournalUSA



U.S. Presidential Transitions

Electronic Journal of the US Department of State

January 2009

We often read or hear about turmoil before, during, or after elections around the

world. An important characteristic of democracy in the United States, however, is the regularly recurring peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next. Americans know when the next presidential election will take place – the Tuesday after the first Monday in November every four years. And power will be transferred to the newly elected (or re-elected) president on January 20 of the following year.

Web access : <http://www.america.gov/media/pdf/ejs/0109.pdf#popup>

U.S. Poster Show at the National Library



Visitors to the National Library have opportunity to see the poster show as well

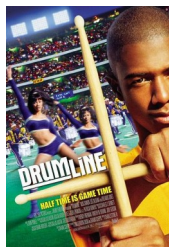
Starting in January 2009, visitors to the National Library of Sri Lanka can also learn more about the United States through our expanded poster shows there.

The Poster

Shows on various topics such as democracy, freedom of expression, human rights etc. share new and interesting information about America, its history, people and culture, with Sri Lankans.

Every Thursday at 2.30pm

Entrance free !



February 5

Drumline (2002, Running time: 120 minutes)

Drumline brings the world of "show-style" marching bands (popular at traditionally black, Southern colleges) to the big screen for the first time. The story, by Shawn Schepps, was inspired by the high school drumline experiences of executive producer/executive music producer Dallas Austin. Devon (Nick Cannon of Nickelodeon's The Nick Cannon Show) is a Harlem drummer who earns a full scholarship to the fictional Atlanta A&T University. There, his talent gets the attention of the school's embattled musical director, Dr. Lee (Orlando Jones), who puts his students' education and appreciation for musical tradition ahead of the marching band's popularity. Devon's brashly egotistical attitude doesn't endear him to Lee, whose slogan for the band is "One band, one sound," or to the drumline's disciplined captain, Sean (Leonard Roberts, late of TV's Buffy the Vampire Slayer). Devon has more success with the dance captain of the marching band, Laila (Zoe Saldana, who played a ballet dancer in Center Stage), a Southern belle who's won over by Devon's confidence.



February 12

The Color Purple (1985, Running time: 153 minutes)

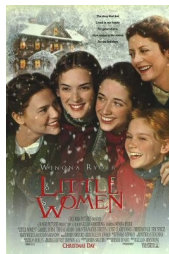
Based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alice Walker, The Color Purple spans the years 1909 to 1949, relating the life of Celie (Whoopi Goldberg), a Southern black woman virtually sold into a life of servitude to her brutal husband, sharecropper Albert (Danny Glover). Celie pours out her innermost thoughts in letter form to her sister Nettie (Akousa Busia), but Albert has been hiding the letters Nettie writes back, allowing Celie to assume that Nettie is dead. Finally, Celie finds a champion in the don't-take-no-guff Sofia (Oprah Winfrey), the wife of Glover's son from a previous marriage. Alas, Sofia is "humbled" when she is beaten into submission by angry whites. Later, Celie is able to forge a strong friendship with Albert's mistress Shug (Margaret Avery). Emboldened by this, Celie begins rifling through her husband's belongings and finds Nettie's letters. Able at last to stand up to her husband, Celie leaves him to search for a new life on her own. A major box-office hit, The Color Purple was nominated for eleven Oscars. The film was co-produced by Quincy Jones, who also wrote the score.



February 19

Save the Last Dance (2001, Running time: 125 minutes)

Sara Johnson (Stiles) dreams of becoming a professional ballerina. After the accidental death of her mother, Sara is forced to move from Lemont, a quiet Chicago suburb, to her father's ghetto apartment on Chicago's gritty south side. The new urban environment, very different than what she is used to, adds to Sara's feelings of loss and frustration, and her misplaced guilt, which is caused by the fact that her mother had been en route to her dance performance at the time of her death. But when she meets Derek (Sean Patrick Thomas), a popular fellow student with a passion for hip hop dancing and a future brighter than his troubled past, her repressed ambition is released through a revitalized interest in dance.



February 26

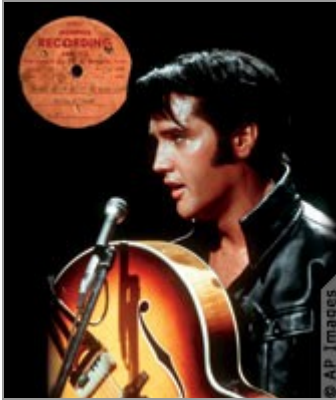
Little Women (1994, Running time: 115 minutes)

Louisa May Alcott's classic novel about a family of women in Civil War-era New England is again brought to the screen in this adaptation. The focus is on the March sisters, four young girls raised by their mother (Susan Sarandon) after their father leaves for battle as part of the Union Army. At the center is Jo March (Winona Ryder), an idiosyncratic would-be writer said to be based on Alcott herself, but the film also focuses on the stories of her sisters -- the more conventional Meg (Trini Alvarado), the innocent Beth (Claire Danes), and the precocious Amy (Kirsten Dunst and Samantha Mathis, who represent Amy at different ages.) The film spans years, following the girls' struggles with life's challenges and illustrating how their family connection remains strong in the face of tragedies large and small. Australian director Gillian Armstrong emphasizes the story's feminist elements, particularly in Jo's journey to independence.

For more details about after school movie screenings : Tel: 2498146 E-mail : amcentersl@state.gov

Rock 'n' Roll: A Generation's Identity

New music for a new generation



"I'll Never Stand in Your Way" (1953) is Elvis Presley's first known recording. The "King of Rock 'n' Roll" holds numerous chart-toppin

The rise of rock 'n' roll in the mid-1950s transformed the landscape of American popular music, further cementing the popularity of southern-derived styles ultimately derived from the blues and country music, and transforming the teenager into both a marketing concept and a cultural icon. Rock 'n' roll records were played for dances at inner-city,

primarily black, public schools, for parties at predominantly white suburban private schools, and for socials in rural settings catering to young people. If you were young in the 1950s in the United States, no matter where you lived, no matter what your race or class, rock 'n' roll was your music.

The advent of rock 'n' roll music in the mid-1950s brought enormous changes to American popular music, changes whose impact is still being felt. Styles that had remained on the margins of pop music began to infiltrate and eventually dominate the center. Rhythm & blues and country music recordings were no longer directed to specialized and regionalized markets; they began to be heard on mainstream pop radio, and many could be purchased in music stores nationwide.

The emergence of rock 'n' roll was an event of great cultural significance. But several issues demand our attention: first, rock 'n' roll was neither a "new," nor indeed even a single musical style; second, the rock 'n' roll era does not mark the first time that music was written specifically to appeal to young people; third, rock 'n' roll was certainly not the first American music to fuse black and white popular styles.

The new audience was dominated by the so-called baby boom generation born immediately following

World War II. It was a much younger target group than ever before, a large audience that shared specific characteristics of group cultural identity. These were kids growing up in the 1950s, a period of relative economic stability and prosperity marked by a return to socially and politically conservative ways. This was also the first generation to grow up with television; this new mass medium proved a force of incalculable influence.

The term "rock 'n' roll" was first used for commercial and generational purposes by disc jockey Alan Freed. In the early 1950s Freed discovered that increasing numbers of young white kids were listening to and requesting the rhythm & blues records he played on his nighttime program in Cleveland – records he began to call "rock 'n' roll." Freed promoted concert tours featuring black artists, playing to a young, racially mixed audience, and promoted them as "rock 'n' roll revues." The term "rock 'n' roll" itself was derived from the many references to "rockin" and "rollin" found in rhythm & blues songs and on race records.

The purchase of rock 'n' roll records by kids in the 1950s proved a way of asserting their generational identity through rebellion against adult standards and restrictions. Thus the experience of growing up with rock 'n' roll music became a defining characteristic of the baby boom generation. So it is not surprising that the music catered to this age group, which by the late 1950s had its own distinctive culture and its associated rituals: school and vacation (represented in songs such as "School Day" and "Summertime Blues"), fashions ("Black Denim Trousers and Motorcycle Boots" and "Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polkadot Bikini"), social dancing ("At the Hop" and "Save the Last Dance for Me"), and courtship ("Teen-Age Crush," "Puppy Love," "A Teenager in Love," and "Poor Little Fool"). Some rock 'n' roll songs – for example, "Roll Over Beethoven" and "Rock 'n' Roll Is Here to Stay" – announced themselves as emblems of a new aesthetic and cultural order, dominated by the tastes and aspirations of youth.

Source www.america.gov

Film Screenings at the American Center

February 2009 - Musicals

Every Tuesday at 6.00pm

February 3 - The Music Man (1962, 151 minutes)

Meredith Wilson's hit 1957 Broadway musical was transferred to the screen in larger-than-life fashion in 1962. Robert Preston repeats his legendary stage performance as fast-talking con man Harold Hill, who goes from town to town selling citizens on starting a "boy's band," then extracts money from them by ordering instruments and uniforms, with the promise that he'll teach the kids how to be musicians. Once he's collected his bankroll, Hill skips town, leaving the kids in the lurch. Looking for new suckers in Iowa, Hill arrives in River City, where he declares that the only way to save the youth of River City from the lure of the poolroom is to organize a boy's band. He charms the mayor's wife Eulalie (Hermione Gingold) into forming a "ladies' dance committee" and sets his sights on winning over local music teacher Marian Paroo (Shirley Jones). Marian rightly considers Hill a fraud, especially when he espouses the "Think System" of learning music: if you think a tune, he claims, you can play it. But Marian becomes Hill's staunchest ally when her young brother Winthrop (Ronny Howard), sullen and withdrawn since the death of his father, exuberantly comes out of his shell at the prospect of joining Hill's band; and Marian's budding romance with the charming but unreliable Hill ultimately brings her out of her own shell as well.

February 10 - Oklahoma! (1955, 145 minutes)

A musical about two lovers on the range, based on the musical by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, from the 1931 play *Green Grow the Lilacs* by Lynn Riggs. Released in 1955, this Academy Award-winning film was the first production to use the Todd-AO wide screen projection format. A cowboy and a country girl find romance together in Oklahoma, where the wind comes sweeping down the plain. Difficulties soon arise in the form of an additional, unwanted suitor. This film features much dancing and singing, including the songs, "Oklahoma!" "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning," and many others. Won 2 Oscars, another 1 win and 3 nominations.

February 17 - Anchors Aweigh (1945, 143 minutes)

This mammoth musical is at base the story of two sailors on leave in Hollywood. Brash Joseph Brady (Gene Kelly) has promised his shy pal Clarence Doolittle (Frank Sinatra) that he will introduce Clarence to all the glamorous movie starlets whom he allegedly knows so well. Actually, the only actress whom Joseph meets is bit player Susan Abbott (Kathryn Grayson). He arranges for the golden-throated Susan to be auditioned by musician José Iturbi, but when she seems to want to return the favor romantically, Brady tries to foist the girl off on Clarence. But Clarence only has eyes for a fellow Brooklynite (Pamela Britton). Also involved in the plot machinations is runaway orphan Donald Martin (Dean Stockwell). Featuring Kelly dancing with such partners as a cartoon mouse (courtesy of MGM's house animators Bill Hanna and Joseph Barbera), *Anchors Aweigh* was a huge hit in 1945, assuring audiences future Gene Kelly/Frank Sinatra teamings.

February 24 - Hair (1979, 121 minutes)

A musical about a young man from a small town who befriends a group of hippies in New York City's Central Park, based on a Broadway musical by Gerome Ragni, James Rado, and Galt MacDermot. Released in 1979, the film tells the story of Claude (played by John Savage), an Oklahoman who travels to New York to get inducted into the Army. A group of longhaired youths befriend Claude and sing to him. When Claude develops a crush on a rich girl (Beverly D'Angelo) he sees riding a horse through the park, the hippies help him crash her debutante ball. After Claude falls in love and learns about the counterculture, he goes to the Army induction center and joins the Vietnam War effort. Nominated for 2 Golden Globes, another 2 wins and 2 nominations.

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